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ABSTRACT

This report presents recommendations to strengthen quality and improve programs and services in the Vermont State College (VSC) for Vermont and Vermonters for the next 10-15 years. The report notes three major changes in the VSC and in the role which education beyond high school plays: that VSC enrollments have increased by 37 percent in the past 6 years; that the gap between the earning power of high school and college graduates has widened greatly in recent years; and that there has been a worsening financial crisis developing over the years for both the students and VSC. Recommendations proposed include the following: (1) reaffirm VSC's public mission, i.e., its purposes and expectations for investment in higher education, as its cornerstone; (2) modestly expand the VSC's library, academic, and student housing capacity; (3) strengthen the five VSC's identities and individual characters as learning communities; (4) forge new relationships with K-12 educational institutions in Vermont; (5) further expand VSC's direct contributions to economic development in Vermont; and (6) help create a financial future which will assure Vermonters access to affordable, high quality public higher education. Appendices present trends in high school graduates during 1977-2000, data on educational attainment and personal income, and data on student family income and loan burdens. Contains 21 references. (GLR)

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# Vermont State Colleges

# Futures Task Force II Report

April 1992

HE 026 061

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# Vermont State Colleges

# Futures Task Force II Report

April 1992

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April 1992

TO: Governor Dean, Members of the General Assembly, and the People of Vermont:

Exactly five years ago it was my pleasure to present to fellow Vermonters the report of the first Futures Task Force of the Vermont State Colleges. There have been significant changes nationally, in Vermont, and in postsecondary education since the publication of that report in the mid-1980's. In response to these social and economic changes, the VSC Board of Trustees established Futures Task Force II in the Summer of 1990. I am now pleased to present for your consideration the report of Futures Task Force II.

During the past year-and-a-half, over eighty individuals from within and beyond the Vermont State Colleges have participated in discussions about future needs for education and training in Vermont and about the VSC mission and operations. Four questions drove this planning process:

- What is the caliber of programs and services? How can they be improved?
- Can Vermonters afford college, enter the programs they desire, and are they prepared to succeed in college?
- For those who gain access—access to what? As we enter the 1990's, what are the programs needed in Vermont?
- How does Vermont, and how should Vermont, distribute the costs of public higher education?

The Vermont State Colleges have grown significantly over the past five years, from 7,600 to over 10,300 students, 81% of whom are Vermonters. Despite the devastating effects of the recession, we continue to operate with balanced budgets. VSC institutions have made significant qualitative improvements in academic programs, and have extended programs to underserved regions through the Southern Vermont Education Center, Vermont Interactive Television, and programs at the worksite. The completion of the SHAPE facilities on the four campuses has had a positive impact on academic programs, student life, and college/community relations.

However, the VSC faces significant challenges that have been better defined through our recent strategic planning. There are troubling signs that the number of Vermonters pursuing a postsecondary education is stalling or declining. Our tuition and fee charges remain the highest in the country for a public college system. Yet, because of declines in appropriations in this period of growth, we are concerned that expenditures per student also have declined through this period.

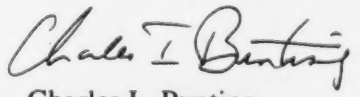
It has become more apparent that completion of some postsecondary education is necessary for an individual to be economically self-sufficient. On a larger scale, business and industry require a workforce that not only is educated, but also has the capacity to continue to learn.

While the VSC seeks to respond to many of these social and economic shifts, there are internal pressures as well. Enrollment growth over the past five years has brought the VSC close to its capacity—just when the number of Vermont high school graduates is expected to begin to increase. Expenditure reductions and appropriation recisions have further cut into VSC's low level of operational resources in areas such as library books, academic equipment, and staffing levels.

However, there is a clear purpose in planning, even during tough times. Contained within this report are analyses and recommendations that point new directions by which the VSC should continue to meet its public mission over the next decade. The VSC should:

- continue to restrain tuition increases and to extend postsecondary education programs and services to underserved regions;
- increase quality through new approaches to strengthen undergraduate teaching and student learning;
- play a leadership role in the development of postsecondary vocational education in Vermont;
- work closely with business and industry to provide a responsive system of education and training programs;
- increase student capacity through modest capital growth and through continuing reliance on cost-effective delivery systems which reach out to rural Vermonters.

The partnership between the State of Vermont and the Vermont State Colleges benefits the citizens of this state. We hope this report provides an outline of both the challenges and opportunities as we seek to provide postsecondary education programs and services to citizens throughout all regions of Vermont.



Charles I. Bunting
Chancellor and Chairman,
Futures Task Force II

# THE VSC PUBLIC MISSION

The findings, conclusions and recommendations in this report underscore the importance of the Vermont State Colleges' public mission to Vermonters and Vermont. The Futures Task Force II members and the VSC Board of Trustees emphatically reaffirmed the VSC mission statement developed in 1985 for the first Futures Task Force report. It is fitting that such a central tenet be included in this report as well.

*The distinctive characteristic of American public education is the commitment to provide opportunity for every student to achieve to the maximum of his or her ability. Access to higher education represents opportunity for personal, intellectual, cultural, and economic growth—opportunity for greater understanding of the self and the social and natural worlds, and thus an increased capacity to act in those worlds.*

*Broad access to higher education serves the public interest as well as the individual. In large measure, the continued vitality of American society results from the opportunity provided to all, regardless of circumstance, by public schools and public support for higher education. The competitive position of this nation in the world, and improvement in the quality of social and cultural life, depend upon social mobility driven by access to higher education.*

*All colleges seek to benefit society, and all colleges serve individual students. But it is the* ***obligation*** *to serve the public good—to provide full access to Vermonters and serve regional and statewide needs—which distinguishes Vermont's public colleges. This obligation influences and informs decisions about programs offered to students and services provided to help meet social, cultural, and economic needs in Vermont.*

*For the public good, through good times and bad, Vermont needs a strong, healthy and viable system of public colleges to:*

- *Insure that Vermonters will always have access to higher education and, through it, opportunity to improve their lives;*
- *Provide Vermonters both general and specific educational programs which permit them to lead more productive, responsible, and satisfying lives as adults;*
- *Insure that Vermont's public schools, small businesses, hi-tech and tourist industries, agriculture and government can find the educated people they need here;*
- *Maintain and improve the quality of cultural, social, and economic life in all of Vermont.*

# SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

In 1985, the VSC Board of Trustees launched a strategic planning process called the Futures Task Force which arrived at a series of recommendations to strengthen quality and improve programs and services for Vermont and Vermonters. With policy and financial support from the State of Vermont, a remarkable number of the recommendations were realized in full or in part over the next few years. For example:

- VSC libraries added reference personnel and book collections, and completed the computerized access project.
- New health and physical education facilities (SHAPE) were constructed at the four campus colleges to serve both the colleges and communities.
- The VSC recognized the importance of, and increased its internal support for, "people development" as its most important investment toward improved quality.
- The VSC greatly expanded work-based training and education programs designed to strengthen job skills in both small and large employers.
- Vermont Interactive Television was piloted and then implemented in several sites to provide needed programs and services to Vermonters.
- The Southern Vermont Education Center was established in Springfield to deliver higher education programs and services to Southern Vermont.

Despite—and in part because of—the VSC's progress over the years since 1985, it became clear by 1990 that the Board again needed to reassess its priorities and needs for the future. Since 1985, major changes have taken place in the Vermont State Colleges, in Vermont, and in the role which education beyond high school plays for our citizens. Three important examples will suffice:

- **Enrollment Crunch:** VSC enrollments have increased by 37%, from 7,500 to 10,300 over the past six years, with 81% of the students now Vermonters. These present enrollments are pressing our capacity limits, but the VSC's primary mission is to provide access to Vermonters. It is essential to determine the likely future demands and needs of Vermonters for VSC services and programs.
- **A Changed World:** The gap between the earning power of high school and college graduates has widened greatly in recent years. In 1979, the earnings gap was 32%; by 1989 it had increased to 79%. This trend reflects changes in entry requirements for jobs. For example, in 1988 IBM in Essex Junction begin requiring two-year technical degrees for new "assembly line" employees. The VSC and the State of Vermont need to reexamine their assumptions about education beyond high school—which is now more of a *necessity* than an *option* for our citizens.
- **Financial Crunch:** Financial characteristics of the VSC and our students, which were of real concern in 1985, have worsened over the succeeding years. VSC tuitions continue to be the highest among all public colleges, and the loan debt of VSC graduates has increased to the $7-9,000 range. In an effort to keep VSC tuitions affordable while state support is declining, VSC's historically thin operating budgets have been cut severely, and expenditures per student are lower (in constant dollars) in 1992 than they were in 1985. The VSC's dependency on tuition dollars has increased greatly, as low appropriations have dropped the state share of overall funding from 35% in 1975, to 27% in 1985, to 22% in 1991.

Accordingly, the VSC Board of Trustees established *Futures Task Force II* in the Summer of 1990 to define critical needs and priorities for the next 10-15 years. Over the next twelve months, more than 80 Vermonters within and outside the VSC grappled with a wide range of issues and projections. Key conclusions and recommendations reached by the Futures Task Force II and the VSC Board are summarized below.

1. **Reaffirm the VSC's public mission as its cornerstone.** We found compelling evidence that education beyond high school is increasingly essential for both society and individuals—and, indeed, that many Vermonters already fully recognize this fact. As public colleges, the VSC's *obligation* to meet Vermont's needs for further education and training therefore becomes even more critical for our own planning and for the State of Vermont. Among other implications:

   - The State of Vermont will need to reassess its purposes and expectations for investment in higher education. Increasingly, the State will need the *assurance* that affordable, high quality programs are available to its citizens. It is this assurance, or obligation, which is at the heart of the VSC's public mission to serve the State's needs for further education. The State and the VSC will need to develop further their "public compact" to adequately plan for meeting these educational needs.

2. **Modestly expand the VSC's library, academic, and student housing capacity.** In the Fall of 1991, VSC enrollments surpassed 10,000 students for the first time. One major impetus for the establishment of the Futures Task Force was concern about overcrowding at the colleges as well as future demands for VSC programs. We found:

   - Despite the much-publicized decline in high school graduates over the same period, VSC enrollments of traditional-age students increased by 26% over the past six years.
   - Adult enrollments also continued to increase, up 30% over the same period.
   - Current enrollments, especially at Castleton, Johnson and Lyndon have exceeded the capacity of libraries, classrooms, and dormitories, and threatened quality and efficiency. Similarly, the number of part-time adult students at the Community College of Vermont continues to increase dramatically, well in excess of the capacity of current facilities in towns throughout the state.
   - Over the next decade, Vermonter demand for VSC campus and non-campus programs and services will increase as high school graduation numbers rise again, along with continuing increases in adult enrollments.

   Based on these findings, the Futures Task Force and VSC Board advise careful and selective expansion of library and academic facilities and student housing, to be funded jointly by the State of Vermont and the VSC.

   - We recommend State funding for library and classroom expansion at Castleton, Johnson, and Lyndon, and VSC funding for modest increases in student housing capacity.
   - We recommend State and VSC funding support for facilities expansion at CCV site offices and a VTC student center.

Completion of this building program will significantly increase the quality and efficiency of VSC operations while expanding student capacity, without altering the basic character of the Vermont State Colleges as small public institutions committed to individual attention and community values.

**Further expand VSC's direct contributions to economic development in Vermont.** To develop and maintain the economy and jobs Vermont needs, both younger and older Vermonters must have access to top quality training services and educational programs. The VSC now has an essential and impressive set of training services in place: at large employers such as IBM; for small businesses in the Northeast Kingdom; *via* the Vermont Interactive Television system to several locations; in community centers; and on our campuses. Beyond this progress, and with assistance from the State, the VSC needs to move these efforts to a new stage of commitment to:

- Provide programs in concert with employers, agencies, and the State's vocational centers which can serve as "ladders" for Vermonters' future career and educational plans. In particular, join the technical expertise of VTC with the adult delivery system of CCV to meet postsecondary vocational needs in Vermont.
- Exploit the VSC's strengths as a statewide delivery system to provide training and consulting assistance to small businesses throughout the state.
- Extend the Vermont Interactive Television system to remaining unserved areas of the State to fully realize VIT's proven capacity to provide training for more remote businesses and employees.
- Join with the State and municipalities to attract and retain employers in Vermont particularly extolling the State's "education and training advantage."
- Coordinate the VSC's direct services and programs with all other "providers" in Vermont to strengthen services and eliminate overlap and duplication.

4. **Strengthen the five Vermont State Colleges' identity and character as learning communities.** Recognizing the important roles of scholarship and community service, the "heart" of the VSC institutions' mission is undergraduate teaching and learning. To best serve Vermont and its people, the VSC should fully develop this essential mission.
   - Implement this emphasis on teaching and learning through the recruitment, evaluation, and development of faculty; the use of additional measures of student learning and teaching effectiveness; the allocation of core resources; and the educational role of student activities beyond the classroom.
   - Strengthen the ability of all employees to contribute to student development and learning by enhancing the quality of worklife at the colleges and improving internal communications.
   - Continue to emphasize and support development of faculty, staff, and students throughout the VSC, in recognition that the "people of the VSC" represent our major assets in the educational process.

5. **Forge new relationships with K-12 education in Vermont.** Vermont's public schools and the VSC are crucial partners in meeting the lifelong educational needs of Vermonters. Most of the VSC's students come from Vermont's public schools, many of Vermont's teachers are VSC graduates, and the VSC is a major provider of graduate and continuing education. The critical campaign underway to renew and strengthen K-12 education in Vermont is VSC's challenge and opportunity as well.

   - Fully implement the requirements and benefits of the liberal arts major for Vermont's future teachers.
   - Develop intensive clinical sites with local schools for the pre-service component of teacher preparation programs.
   - Determine the significant and changing needs for further education and development of our schools' teachers and administrators, and adapt VSC programs and resources accordingly.

6. **Create a financial future which will assure Vermonters access to affordable, high quality public higher education.** The Vermont State Colleges provide to needy Vermonters their principal access to higher education programs and services. Particularly in recent years, the VSC has taken bold, imaginative steps to provide to these students geographic and program access. However, the high costs encountered by these students and the VSC's fiscal stability are profoundly influenced by factors outside our control: the volatility of state appropriation levels, and the choices of higher-paying, out-of-state students. For example, the State has provided no adjustment to VSC appropriations despite the 35% increase in enrollments over the past half-decade; as a consequence the VSC now has less funding per student than it did in 1985, with resulting concerns about maintaining quality in its programs and services.

   The current economic climate of Vermont and New England, as well as declining student demographics in the region, have underscored the fragility (and frugality) of the VSC's financial foundations, and the problems of affordability for students and families faced with the highest public college tuitions in the nation.

   As the State comes to recognize the essential role which public higher education must fulfill in the present and future if Vermonters are to have control over their adult lives, we need to create a more sustainable and predictable financial future which permits rational planning for VSC students and their families, as well as for public higher education institutions and programs.

   **This task of preparing a more stable financial future is an essential joint planning responsibility of the VSC and the State of Vermont, the two partners in the "public compact." Building upon the conclusions of this report and several related public policy studies completed over the past several years, we recommend that this joint planning process begin at once.**

# FUTURES TASK FORCE II REPORT

## ORIGINS OF THE FUTURES TASK FORCE II

### BACKGROUND: THE FIRST FUTURES TASK FORCE

The public corporation of the Vermont State Colleges (VSC) was established through state statutes in 1961 to include Castleton, Johnson, and Lyndon State Colleges and Vermont Technical College. Community College of Vermont, founded in 1970, became the fifth college within the VSC in 1972. Thus, this relatively new public corporation is much younger than its four campus colleges. Castleton traces its history back to 1787, VTC to 1801, Johnson to 1828, and Lyndon to 1911.

The VSC operated as a loose confederation of colleges between 1961 and the late 1970's: each college had its own institutional history, its regional supporters, and had been operating for years under its own institutional mission. During this "confederation" period, most of the VSC buildings were constructed, many of the current academic programs were initiated, and enrollments steadily grew as baby boomers reached college age. The overwhelming majority of VSC students were 18 to 24 years old and attended college full-time.

Despite modest enrollment growth, however, the VSC experienced serious difficulties in the mid-to-late 1970's. There was little coordination of academic, financial, and personnel activities. Budgets were partially funded by borrowing from bond reserves and there was no common accounting system among the five colleges. So, between 1977 and 1979, the Board of Trustees exercised its responsibility to govern the VSC and put in place governance, fiscal, academic, and personnel controls.

With this improved governance and administration, the VSC overcame the difficulties of the late 1970's, and through the first half of the 1980's experienced stable enrollments, balanced budgets, and consistent management. This stability provided an opportunity for the VSC to engage in its first comprehensive strategic planning activity: the VSC Futures Task Force.

The first Futures Task Force was chaired by Chancellor Bunting (then new to the VSC), and included more than sixty individuals from within and outside the VSC. The Task Force began with a definition of the VSC mission. With this public mission as its foundation, the Task Force proceeded with one planning question: what were the basic assumptions about the external environment?

This first Task Force noted a steady decline in the number of high school graduates; the resulting increase in competition for traditional-age students; the potential benefits of telecommunications applications for higher education; steady reductions in federal support for higher education; and low, yet consistent, state appropriations for VSC operating and capital support.

This first Task Force also identified three major barriers faced by Vermonters seeking post-secondary education:

- **Economic barriers:** High public tuitions in a low-income state could put college beyond the financial reach of some Vermonters; increasing loan burdens could deter students (especially from low-income families) from pursuing college; and, finally, "sticker shock" could have a similar effect when high tuition levels discouraged Vermonters from pursuing college plans or even investigating the availability of financial aid.

- **Educational barriers:** Students needed the opportunity to succeed in college, not just the opportunity to get into college. The first Task Force noted that the colleges had to meet "the student at his or her level at entry to college and work from there." Additionally, the system of colleges needed to have a full range of programs to meet the needs of both students and Vermont's employers.
- **Geographic barriers:** The final barrier described in the first Task Force Report was the rurality of Vermont—the distance between many communities and postsecondary education programs. Despite the four VSC campuses and the twelve sites of Community College of Vermont, the Report noted that especially for "adults and others who want to continue living at home while attending college" there were substantial access challenges.

This, then, was the VSC environment in 1985: a clear public mission, an improved system of governance, financial stability albeit with low levels of resources, minor enrollment increases, and an increasing awareness and ability to respond to statewide education and training needs. That initial planning activity had numerous positive outcomes. The final report provided an agenda for action which resulted in library improvements, improved faculty and staff development, academic equipment planning, extended outreach through the Southern Vermont Education Center and Vermont Interactive Television, and dormitory and SHAPE capital construction.

## THE REASONS FOR FUTURES TASK FORCE II

Less than five years after the completion of the first Futures Task Force Report, the Chancellor and the VSC Board of Trustees determined that a second round of comprehensive strategic planning was needed. While most of the recommendations of the first Futures Task Force had been—or continued to be—addressed, many changes within and beyond the VSC between 1985 and 1990 challenged the VSC's ability to accomplish its public mission.

### Enrollment and capacity

VSC enrollment increased dramatically despite the downturn in the number of high school graduates in Vermont and the Northeast. In the Fall of 1984, the VSC total enrollment was 7,284. In the Fall of 1990, that enrollment grew to 9,834—a 35% jump. In the Fall of 1991, VSC enrollment surpassed 10,000 students. What did not change was that Vermonters continued to represent about 80% of all VSC students.

But in addition to the volume change, the profile of the VSC student body had changed. By 1990, with more full-time and part-time students, the part-time students were now in the majority. Additionally, the student body was older, with more than half of the students beyond traditional college age (18-22 years of age for undergraduates and 21-26 years of age for graduates). In fact, by the Fall of 1991, the *average* age of a VSC student was twenty-nine years old.

VSC grew near capacity at a time when the number of high school graduates was at its lowest (see Appendix A). Thus, the VSC could be at or beyond student capacity when the number of high school graduates begins its steady increase through the mid-1990's.

A related capacity question was whether the VSC had the resources to meet this increasing demand for its programs and services. Did the VSC have enough instructors, facilities, equipment and services to continue to accept and enroll all qualified Vermonters? Did the VSC have the appropriate programs for this increasingly diverse student body? Could the VSC expand capacity and increase resources to continue to provide access, or would the VSC be forced to limit access and modify its mission?

### Vermont policy objectives

A second factor was the more apparent need for postsecondary education to become an integral component, by design, of the State's overall economic development plan. Through the late 1980's, and made even more apparent by the 1991 recession, economic development and the need for an educated workforce became obvious not just to the business and industry sector of Vermont, but to environmentalists, human services advocates, educators, and members of the arts community. The decline in traditional manufacturing jobs and the dwindling number of family farms reduced employment opportunities. The growth in service sector employment was based, to a large degree, upon minimum-wage jobs.

There was an increasing recognition that a robust economy was needed for Vermont to achieve its policy objectives in areas such as education, human welfare, the environment, and its overall standard of living. One key element of a robust economy is an educated and productive workforce employed in diverse, well-paying occupations. The Governor's Commission on the Economic Future of Vermont (1989) noted in its report *Pathways to Prosperity* that

> *the most successful economies will be those that serve the most educated people. Conversely, the gravest threat to Vermont's future ability to compete economically would be a workforce that is not mentally prepared to perform the jobs and run the businesses of the 21st century.*

National data supported the Commission's assertions. Personal income levels increase consistently with gains in educational attainment. The earnings gap between college graduates and high school graduates has never been greater—with college graduates earning 70% more per week (Murphy and Welch, 1989). Individuals whose educational attainment was below the associate (two-year) degree level actually lost income to inflation through the mid-80's while those with an associate degree or higher had earnings growth beyond inflation (Levy, 1989 and U.S. Bureau of Census, 1990). And, finally, the likelihood of poverty decreases with greater educational attainment. A Vermont family whose householder completed even one year of college was almost three times less likely to live in poverty than a family whose householder had some high school education. (Appendix B illustrates the correlation between educational attainment and income.)

### National concerns about higher education

Concurrent with the VSC enrollment increases and the growing concern about Vermont's workforce, a more strident national debate developed in the late 1980's about higher education. National legislation required colleges to report statistics on campus crimes, stories about athletic scholarship abuses called into question the role of sports within the college experience, tuition increases which outpaced both inflation and financial aid were captured in newspaper headlines (which most often cited the full-year's cost at the nation's most expensive colleges), and questions about the quality of undergraduate instruction (especially at prestigious "research" institutions) were more frequent. Additionally, a number of reports reviewing enrollment trends of the 1980's indicated a serious erosion in the representation of low-income students among the college-going population (Mortenson, 1990 & 1991). It was clearly an opportune time for higher education to re-evaluate its programs, services, finances and values, beginning with basic questions about mission and purpose.

**VSC core resources**

In Vermont, the unexpected rate of increase in the demand for VSC programs and services in the late 1980's generated additional tuition dollars for the VSC. However, this revenue increase did not fully cover the added costs for serving these students. The VSC expenditure per full-time equivalent (FTE) student actually decreased between FY85 and FY92 in inflation-adjusted dollars. The primary reason for this decrease was that the annual state appropriation did not keep up with the VSC enrollment increases or inflation. In constant dollars, the state appropriation *per Vermont FTE* dropped from about $2,900 in FY85 to below $2,500 in FY92.

The declining expenditure per FTE could be viewed as the VSC becoming more efficient with its resources: the VSC was educating more students at a lower rate per student. In some ways this perception is correct. By the Fall of 1990, the campus colleges were working at capacity in numerous operations: student housing was full, dining services were in demand, parking lots were often full, and it was difficult to find unscheduled classrooms during the high-demand times of the week. These were some of the results of a 35% enrollment increase in six years.

However, the increase in demand and the decline in expenditures revealed troubling resource concerns as well: aging academic equipment; limited library resources; inefficient and poor quality instructional spaces; low levels of staffing for essential services; and comparatively low compensation levels for all VSC employee grade levels.

The VSC Board could not pass these costs on to students through annual double-digit tuition increases. Federal and state financial aid amounts were either level or declining throughout the 1980's, so large tuition increases would have made college unaffordable for many more students. Therefore, the revenue dilemma (resulting from enrollment increases, low state appropriations, and constraints on tuition increases) required careful fiscal analysis and planning as the VSC entered the 1990's.

**Worklife and student life within the VSC**

Finally, the remaining catalyst for FTF II was an unfinished agenda item from the first Futures Task Force which stated that "people are the most valuable asset of the Vermont State Colleges." Beyond the concerns about revenue, national issues, state policy objectives, and enrollment increases, many people within the VSC felt that there was still significant, untapped potential within the VSC's "most valuable asset."

The first Task Force stated that "the most important developmental task in improving the quality of the system's services is to help VSC's people—faculty, administrators, staff—improve their lives and their performance." In 1990, it was apparent that quality improvements required detailed strategic planning and a new approach to implementing and experimenting with specific recommendations. The link, however, was clear: improving VSC worklife was a central component to improving the quality of the student experience within the VSC.

## FUTURES TASK FORCE II: THE CHARGE

With these developments in both the internal and external environments, the VSC Board and the Chancellor initiated Futures Task Force II during the Board's summer retreat of 1990. The charge to the Futures Task Force was based upon the VSC's public mission:

> *Futures Task Force II must take another look at Vermont's needs, the VSC's mission and challenges, and VSC's future agenda for action. We can take advantage of the past, but we also need to take a fresh look at the future, as well as at changed conditions.*
>
> *Since 1985, the importance of an accessible, quality system of public higher education has become more apparent as states—and individuals and employers—recognize the connections among their economies, their democratic institutions, and citizens' levels of education. Higher levels of income and productivity are directly related to educational attainment. A high school diploma alone is much less likely to produce an individual with the education and job skills for a lifetime of employment.*
>
> *And in Vermont, aspiration for and enrollment in college has risen over the past five years, gradually for younger students, and explosively for older students. Concerns have heightened as well over this period. The Vermont Higher Education Study Commission noted many of these: the VSC's fiscal reliance upon out-of-state tuitions, low levels of state appropriation for public higher education, and increasing concerns about Vermonters' ability to afford college in our high tuition state. Within the VSC, we continue to work with low budgets for critical operations related to programs, personnel, facilities, and equipment.*
>
> *The VSC plays a critical role in providing postsecondary education to Vermonters. However, VSC is not alone in this provision of services: Vermonters also attend the University of Vermont, Vermont's private colleges, and out-of-state colleges. Vermont's K-12 schools play a central role in earlier preparation, and Vermont's employers are increasingly reliant upon the outcomes of this entire educational system. Therefore, while the Futures Task Force II will conclude with a report focused on the VSC, it must begin with analyses of* ***Vermont's*** *needs for postsecondary education—as it currently exists, and as it might exist in the future.*

Within this context, the Futures Task Force was charged by the VSC Board to respond to four questions:

1. *First*, what will be Vermont's future needs for postsecondary education—not just who will attend, but when, where, how often, and for what programs?
2. *Second*, what is the VSC's role and obligation to meet these needs? What assumptions do we make about others' roles?
3. *Third*, what opportunities and constraints are present which affect the VSC's ability to respond?
4. *Fourth*, what changes will be needed in State and VSC policies and practices if we are to effectively carry out our mission?

# FUTURES TASK FORCE II: FINDINGS

The work of the Futures Task Force II was completed through four focus groups which addressed the key issues of quality, access, programs, and finance. Two additional ad hoc groups met to investigate the critical issues of VSC capacity and Vermonters' financial access to college. Details describing the FTF II planning process can be found in Appendix C. What follows are the findings of the four focus groups and the two ad hoc committees.

## THE VSC EMPHASIS ON QUALITY

A major assumption of FTF II was articulated in the Quality Focus Group report (VSC, 1991):

> *the quality of our students' education depends, in large, on the capacities and abiding commitment of the VSC's major resource—its people: faculty, administrators, staff and students.*

Through very reflective discussions, the Quality Focus Group identified one of the key questions of the FTF II planning process:

> *How do we make our colleges more intellectually and socially vital communities?*

A book by Ernest Boyer and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *Campus Life* (1990), suggested areas for further discussion and analysis. Such a community, Boyer argues, is "purposeful, open, just, disciplined, caring and celebrative." To check Boyer's characteristics with the perspectives of VSC employees, a survey distributed to all employees resulted in 435 responses.

With the intensive discussion of a broadly-representative group of VSC employees, the review of Boyer's book, and the results of the VSC employee survey, four major topics related to quality were addressed: college as community, VSC worklife, teaching, and student learning.

### College as Community

An important, initial recognition noted differences between the small VSC colleges and the larger, more impersonal institutions which most college students attend in this country:

> *The VSC . . . with its small size, its isolation from many of the current emphases in higher education, its definition of "scholarship" in the wider context of teaching, and its commitment to teaching and mentoring is in an enviable position.*

However, the small size of the colleges alone does not result in an intellectually and socially vital community. Many VSC employees indicated a sense of isolation; they sought greater participation in the decision-making process affecting their worklives, and sought an affiliation with other professionals engaged in similar work. In essence, people sought stronger bonds with their college community and with their profession.

The discussions and survey results indicated that improved communication within the individual colleges and throughout the VSC system was the starting point for improving the VSC community. There was interest in sharing information, perspectives, and opinions through many formats, not just a biweekly college calendar of events. The purpose should not be just to inform people, but to engage people in the issues that matter to them.

The Quality Focus Group also reinforced the findings of the Capacity Study Group about the importance of the workplace environment:

> *A dark and crowded office shared by several faculty . . . does not nurture contact between faculty and students; dormitories without lounges or common space do not foster the growth of a [student's] voice—except in negative ways; and classrooms without adequate lighting, ventilation, and space create claustrophobia, not community . . . the space we work in must serve to enhance our lives, our conversations, and our work.*

There was also consensus that the VSC communities must be inclusive. The VSC must include and address the needs of employees and students who engage in substance abuse, have difficulties due to other personal problems, or face unique challenges of physical and other handicaps. The VSC, seeking to extend programs to the different regions of the state, must strive to integrate those programs and people into the VSC community. And the VSC should continue its efforts to reflect the diversity of the American culture in its programs, curriculum and recruitment of students, faculty, administrators and staff. The Quality Focus Group found many positive aspects about the VSC communities, but it also showed that developing these communities requires significant attention.

**Student Learning**

Diverse and meaningful assessments of student learning can be useful for improving instruction, modifying curriculum, increasing our understanding of our students' abilities, and learning more about how colleges can positively influence students' lives. Student course evaluations can be useful, but they are limited; reporting graduation rates to the federal government may be necessary, but such reports contain limited data for evaluating or improving college programs and services.

Diverse assessments might include exit interviews, student group discussions within a department or program, or interviews with students five years after their graduation. Students might create portfolios prior to graduation to include documentation illustrating what they have learned. And the colleges need to discover how to assess, or even identify, the learning that takes place beyond the classroom. As the Quality Focus Group observed:

> *The health and success of community, worklife, and teaching in the VSC are finally judged by the outcomes of student learning—in and out of the classroom. We are here for students, and to evaluate the efficacy of our role in their intellectual and moral formation, we need systematic and system-wide ways of assessing our success.*

But the focus group also identified student learning issues beyond assessment:

> *Since we are learning communities, we must organize and develop programs as part of residential or commuter life, and provide students with many learning spaces, from the theatre to the residence lounge, along with encouragement and opportunity to evaluate. We must also be attentive to our own operations and what students learn, even subliminally, from them. (What do we learn from kindness? Rudeness?) And because different students learn in different ways, justice demands that we offer them a variety of instructional methods and technologies. We must all insure that instructional and learning space is commodious and inviting, that library resources and services measure up to student need, that instructional equipment is up-to-date*

*and easily available, that college facilities bespeak the community's commitment to learning, that there is gender and racial equality in and out of the classroom, that we respect differences, and that our most important resource—our people—are there to foster student and community growth.*

**Teaching**

Another critical finding was about teaching:

> *Although teaching is what we do—and do well—there is little systematic talk about teaching, its importance in our lives, and its function in a democratic society . . . when do we reflect on teaching? How do we celebrate our vocations? How do we nourish them? Where is the space or forum for conversation about what we do?*

While some research is completed at VSC institutions, and while many VSC faculty publish scholarly articles and books, the emphasis within the VSC has been on teaching. Yet, this emphasis is not fully realized throughout all possible avenues. How does the VSC develop as a system of teaching colleges, not by default (since they are not research institutions), but by conscious and collaborative design?

One characteristic of a teaching college, obvious as it may seem, is the opportunity to talk about teaching—and not just during an evaluation or a review for promotion or tenure. As the Quality Report described:

> *the classroom is where we consciously or inadvertently reveal ourselves, our talents and deficiencies. Some days, in fact, it is difficult to distinguish the two. So it is painful and embarrassing to be open about the pitfalls and joys of teaching, especially when students fail: their lack of success is viewed as our lack of success. Indeed, to talk about teaching assumes incredible trust in the community. And it is the duty of the academic community to give permission, to encourage open discussion about teaching.*

The VSC Working Group on Faculty Development (a recommendation of the first Futures Task Force) and the annual VSC Faculty Retreat were noted as positive initial steps. There may also be a role for:

- the VSC Board (such as a policy statement about the centrality of teaching);
- the VSC and the VSC Faculty Federation (to critically review the contract to see if it can more aptly reflect the importance of teaching); and
- the individual colleges (to develop hiring practices which demonstrate to candidates the VSC's emphasis on teaching; to create positions at the colleges which are responsible for faculty development, and not as part of the appointment, tenure, and promotion process; to develop a mentoring system for faculty; and more).

Finally, "good advising is inseparable from good teaching and must be acknowledged as such." The Quality Focus Group found that training in advising might be helpful to some faculty, and especially new faculty. Additionally, the VSC and the faculty should seek ways to emphasize and acknowledge this relationship between effective teaching and effective advising.

**VSC Worklife**

The Quality Focus Group noted that

> *if employees do not appreciate the VSC's mission, for example, or the importance of their respective duties, the community cannot be assured of full participation. We must be clear about who we are, what we do, whom we serve and why.*

The Quality Focus Group sought to identify the characteristics of the workplace that engage VSC people in full participation of our services to students: first, the workplace must be a just place—above and beyond contracts. Second, even while acknowledging the fiscal constraints of Vermont and the VSC, there must be just wages. Third, there must be equitable workloads and frank discussion about current inequities. Fourth, there must be improvement in supervision, not just better control or formal evaluation, but supervision based upon growth, communication, participation, and recognition. Finally, there must be flexibility in the workplace—to structure workloads, to capitalize on individual strengths, and to entertain creative solutions.

## ACCESSIBILITY OF VERMONT PUBLIC POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

The public mission of the VSC was reviewed, discussed, and affirmed through the Access Focus Group and, later, by the VSC Board. This decision was made with the awareness that it is becoming even more difficult to insure that all Vermonters have meaningful access to higher education—the central point of the VSC mission statement.

FTF II identified four barriers that Vermonters may encounter when considering enrollment in postsecondary education: financial barriers, educational barriers, geographic barriers, and VSC capacity barriers.

**Financial access**

The first Futures Task Force identified several significant concerns about the extent of financial access for Vermonters in the mid-80's. These included the lack of affordable public higher education in Vermont; the "sticker-shock" effect of high public tuition charges; and the significant loan debts of Vermonters in the VSC at the point of graduation.

Developments since the mid-80's have further substantiated these concerns. Indeed, Futures Task Force II found several trends which challenge those who feel that Vermont has adequate financial access for all of its citizens.

First, VSAC's most recent survey of high school students' plans (the Class of 1990) indicates a decline, for the first time, in high school students' aspiration rate and continuation rate to college (VSAC, 1991). The most important reason cited by those who did not continue their education was "couldn't afford to continue education." The two most important reasons cited why they couldn't afford to continue their education were "parents couldn't contribute enough money," and "didn't want to assume loan debt necessary." (Appendix D illustrates the percentage of Vermont high school students continuing their education after graduation.)

Second, data from the College Scholarship Service (1990) indicate that the average family income for college-going Vermonters who apply for financial aid is well above the national average for aid applicants. Vermont's average family and personal income is still below the national average, so the CSS data raises the question of whether lower-income Vermonters are underrepresented among the Vermont college population.

Third, Vermont institutions enroll significantly fewer Pell grant recipients than national averages—another indication that low-income students may not be proportionately represented among the Vermont college population. These indicators raise the question about whether low-income Vermonters, like the national trend suggests, are choosing not to pursue a college education.

Fourth, and finally, high public tuition results in significant debt burdens for lower-income students, a large proportion of whom attend the Vermont State Colleges. VSC students' loan burdens increased significantly through the 1980's, from $3,700 to over $7,200 between FY82 and FY89. The average loan debt for VSC graduates is approaching the average debt for higher income Vermonters attending UVM, Vermont private colleges, or out-of-state colleges. (Appendix E contains averages for family income and student loan burdens.)

Given these disturbing trends and the importance of further education in the lives of all Vermonters, the State, the VSC and other agencies have a critical interest in learning more about the financial barriers facing low-income students, both young and old. Second, these findings point to the need for the VSC and the State to plan together to assure that the costs to attend Vermont's open access public institutions are affordable for all Vermonters. Third, in recognition that student financial assistance policies represent the other key to assuring financial access in Vermont, the recent recommendations of the Vermont Higher Education Study Commission (1989) deserve renewed attention.

**Educational access**

Many students who aspire to higher education are underprepared for college: they have academic, psychological, and social needs which constrain their ability to succeed in college. Access, therefore, must mean more than getting in the door of the college; access must also be *meaningful*—the student should have a reasonable opportunity to complete college successfully.

Academic support services are among the more costly services the colleges provide. Much of the fiscal support for these VSC programs comes from federal grants which fund learning centers, tutors, counselors, and programs such as Upward Bound. Without these programs, many underprepared Vermont students would encounter substantial educational barriers and the VSC's access mission would be severely compromised.

**Geographic access**

As one of the nation's most rural and wintry states, the geographical barriers confronting Vermonters seeking further education (or just driving from one end of the state to another) are well-known. The VSC has taken substantial steps to reduce those barriers: CCV's twelve sites around the state, the External Degree Program, the establishment of the Southern Vermont Education Center in Springfield, the development of Vermont Interactive Television, and the multitude of credit and non-credit programs at worksites and schools strive to bring educational programs to Vermonters.

Nonetheless, there remain great challenges. Geographic barriers imply that the problem is simply one of distance between the aspiring learner and the higher education institution. For many adult Vermonters and many Vermont employers, however, whether they are 50 or 150 miles to a college is irrelevant. They do not need to be close to the college; they need a specific program. They are not looking to participate in the activities of a campus-based college, but are seeking postsecondary expertise in a particular topic, whether that is computer-based instruction for teachers in a rural elementary school, blueprint reading for employees in a manufacturing plant, or marketing strategies for the owners of a small retail shop.

Geographic access means extending higher education programs to underserved areas—in both traditional and non-traditional ways. This can happen through telecommunications systems (such as VIT), through the expansion of regional educational and training programs, and through improved coordination with other program providers.

**VSC capacity**

Perhaps the most significant finding from FTF II is that the VSC could reach its student capacity in the next two years, given recent levels of growth and current levels of resources (facilities, personnel, finances). This critical access barrier was not predicted by the first Futures Task Force which could not have anticipated the VSC enrollment growth of the late 1980's. *The intersection of these capacity issues with the VSC access mission may, in fact, be the major challenge for the State and the VSC in the 1990's.* As the Capacity Study Group noted: "Quite simply, if the VSC does not have the space for qualified Vermonters, they may have no place else to enroll."

Four major factors influence VSC capacity: the number of enrolled students, the capacity of student housing, the capacity and utilization of facilities, and the number of faculty and staff. All five colleges experienced growth between Fall 1985 and Fall 1991, with a total increase of about 2,500 students. This represents more than 1,000 additional full-time students and almost 1,500 more part-time students.

Dormitories at the four campus colleges are full each fall. A number of the colleges have reduced their requirements that students live on campus. However, off-campus housing and meals are becoming much more expensive. Additionally, on-campus student life has improved, and more students want to participate in these programs. The student demand for housing is now greater than the supply. Some of the colleges have had to transform lounges into dormitory rooms and reconfigure rooms designed for two students to accommodate three students.

Instructional space is more fully utilized within the VSC than it was five or ten years ago. More classes are scheduled in the early morning, late afternoon, and in the evening. Enrollment growth is the primary cause for the increased use of instructional space, but it is not the only reason. Most of the academic buildings are at least ten or twenty years old, and ten years ago the VSC had few computer labs, fewer full-time faculty, and fewer academic support services. Some growth in these three areas has claimed space previously used for class instruction. At CCV, concurrent with major enrollment increases, there is a greater demand for daytime classes, when there is often limited community space available.

Thus, the VSC has many more students enrolled in more courses with less instructional space than it had five years ago. This is what has spread the courses throughout all time periods of the week. It is worth noting, however, that despite the enrollment growth, there has been little change in average class size. Enrollment growth more often has resulted in more sections of a course, or additional courses. One reason for this is that many VSC classrooms accommodate only 15-20 students. Even if an instructor wants to teach a larger group of students, larger class size is often precluded by space limitations. A final and related problem is the quality of some instructional spaces on the four campuses as well as at the CCV sites. The need for additional course sections has forced some colleges to adapt office space and, in some cases, residential space (two dorm rooms with the middle wall eliminated) into classrooms.

The VSC libraries are the other key facilities of college academic life. At each of the colleges there is concern about adequate library space for the collection, staff work space, storage, and student study space. Also, the original library designs did not anticipate the increase of technology within the library, or the space required for it. The libraries at Johnson State College and Lyndon State College especially are too small and limited to provide appropriate services and resources to their increasing user populations.

**Staffing levels: the number of faculty and staff**

Staffing levels within the VSC are very lean. Despite the rapid enrollment increases since 1985, the colleges have not added proportionately to their staffs. There have been two areas of growth since the first Futures Task Force Report. First, the number of full-time faculty has increased slightly in response to the rapid enrollment growth. Additional resources might have made it possible to add even more full-time faculty. Secondly, the colleges have added mid-level staff to deliver the academic support programs developed throughout the 1980's. A significant number of these positions have been funded through federal grants.

Staff, faculty, and administrators employed at the VSC must be flexible. They often carry a number of responsibilities that, at larger institutions, are divided among a number of employees who are then able to specialize in one area. One benefit for the VSC institutions is that more employees are often familiar and supportive of the various parts of the college which must work together to make the enterprise successful. However, the low staffing levels limit the numbers of students who can be served, whether the student is paying a bill at the business office, preparing a student newspaper, receiving tutorial assistance, reviewing a financial aid application, or seeking career counseling.

## PROGRAMMATIC NEEDS IN VERMONT

Futures Task Force II identified four broad programmatic issues:

- the educational needs of adult Vermonters;
- educational support (or transition) programs for both traditional and non-traditional students;
- Vermont's increasing need for health-care personnel; and
- programmatic linkages with K-12 public education.

In addition to these four issues, three more specific areas were noted by FTF II as requiring further investigation and potential recommendation: collaboration with human services programs serving low-income Vermonters, continuing education needs of numerous professions and occupations, and the design and delivery of VSC graduate programs.

**Educational needs of adult Vermonters**

FTF II identified three groups of adult Vermonters, beyond the large numbers already enrolled in higher education, who might directly benefit from non-traditional programs. The first group is the current Vermont workforce, employed by both large and small employers. This workforce is aging, responding to dramatic changes in workplace technology, and witnessing unprecedented global competition. Many large employers in Vermont have developed self-sufficient or collaborative education and training programs for their employees. However, the majority of employed Vermonters still work for organizations which employ fifty or fewer employees. Many small businesses cannot afford an "in-house" educational program, yet the continuing education of two or three employees in a specific field may be critical to the productivity and competitiveness of the business.

The second group includes unemployed and underemployed Vermonters. Representatives of social service and educational organizations who work with this group of adults met with the Task Force and were critical of higher education's service in this area. They noted that:

- colleges (large and small, public and private) seem to be organized primarily for young people—the one exception being CCV;
- programs and services for adults are often uncoordinated;
- there is "not much of a vocational system for adults," while at the same time there is a lack of technical skills in the state;
- there is no coordinated system of postsecondary vocational education leading to certificates or associate degrees;
- educational programs, from an adult's perspective, are often at the wrong locations (a distant and expensive campus);
- there is no broad policy or vision for providing a system of education and training for adults.

Conversation with this group of individuals and with another group of social service workers confirmed recent Census Bureau data: it is very difficult for a high school graduate to "make it" economically without some education and training beyond high school.

The final group of adult Vermonters identified by FTF II were CCV graduates. CCV now enrolls over 4,000 students in credit courses each semester. An increasing percentage, now 44%, are degree-seeking students. CCV's twelve site offices make it possible for these adult Vermonters to earn an associate degree close to home and/or work. The significant enrollment growth of CCV from 1981 to 1991 (from 2,082 students in 1981 to 4,326 in 1991) indicates that adult Vermonters value postsecondary education—for an associate degree, for improved employment, or for individual growth. Is there a similar need for decentralized, accessible bachelor's degree level programs?

**Educational support programs for traditional and non-traditional students**

Meaningful access requires that students accepted into the VSC have a realistic opportunity to succeed in college. Educational support programs, sometimes called transition programs, provide academic advising, counseling, tutorial assistance, and other services which are designed to enable the underprepared student to become a more independent and successful learner. For traditional-age students, a variety of programs currently exists, the best known being the federally-funded Upward Bound programs (currently at Johnson and Lyndon State Colleges). This program identifies high school students in the tenth grade who have the potential to complete college work, but who have experienced little academic success in the early years of high school. By federal mandate, Upward Bound students come from modest-income backgrounds and/or are the first generation in their families to attend college. The program works with students during their last two years in high school, provides an intensive summer session before their freshman year at college and support through that initial college year.

For non-traditional students there are few transition programs as comprehensive as Upward Bound is for traditional students. Adult students most often attend college part-time, are working, and are often raising families. Thus, adult students need services at specific points in their educational career, beginning with one-on-one academic advising and degree planning, and then branching out to include services such as basic skills tutoring, development of study skills, and career counseling.

While the VSC should investigate the expansion of educational support programs for underprepared students (especially through federal program support), FTF II found that the development of these programs in the 1980's has positively influenced the efficacy of programs for all students. Transition programs were, until quite recently, associated with needy students. Colleges have found, however, that many elements of these programs are effective in enabling all students to persist and succeed in college. Innovative freshman year programs, new models for advising and counseling, individual and group tutorials for advanced students, and computer-assisted instruction can enrich the total learning environment of the colleges. Thus, many colleges are finding that integrating elements of these transition programs into core college programs is making the learning experience more productive for all students.

**Vermont's increasing need for health-care personnel**

Regional and national reports have indicated the need for more health-care workers:

> *The health-care industry has been experiencing staff shortages in selected occupations. The industry, however, has been expanding for many years. It is expected to continue to expand, though perhaps not to the extent as in recent years, putting a strain on the labor market to meet the continuing demand* (New England Health Occupations, 1989).

Representatives from the Medical Center Hospital of Vermont and from the Vermont Hospital Association cited the following specific needs in Vermont:

- refresher courses for current health-care workers, especially at non-traditional times;
- new employees needed: physical therapists, radiology technicians, medical records technicians, LPNs, and occupational therapists;
- program information to interest adults in a career change to the health professions;
- two-year programs and clear transfer policies to four-year programs;
- educational programs which include significant training in a health-care environment.

The focus on health-care related programs highlighted some elements which should be integrated into many postsecondary education planning strategies:

- postsecondary education must respond to, or even anticipate, the needs of employers and communities;
- some portion of postsecondary education needs to unabashedly focus on programs that enhance employment and career change;
- programs should be developed in collaboration with the particular industry which will hire a program's graduates;
- some programs should be designed, not adapted, to meet the needs of adult students;
- programs need to capitalize on the use of campus facilities during "down times" in order to maximize facility use.

**Links with K-12 public education in Vermont**

Graduate programs, teacher education, and the implications of K-12 "restructuring" were reviewed by the Futures Task Force II.

While there are a number of graduate programs in education, members of the Programs focus group noted a lack of graduate programs in the arts and sciences. The development of such programs would be consistent with the subject knowledge emphasis in current teacher licensing regulations. Additionally, concern was expressed about the pre-service and in-service education of school administrators, especially principals. The VSC should play a more active role in promoting and delivering professional development programs for principals—especially given the VSC's presence in different regions of the state.

VSC teacher education programs, like others in Vermont and throughout the country, have been designing and implementing programmatic changes over the past three years. Vermont higher education continues to work with the Commissioner of Education to develop alternatives to the traditional program review process even while program changes take place, such as the new requirement that all candidates for Vermont teacher licensure complete a major in one of the liberal arts or sciences. The Deputy Commissioner of Education, meeting with FTF II, identified a need for teacher education programs for adults wanting to make a career change to teaching. There was significant discussion about the need to identify and understand the barriers to this career change, and the need to develop progressive, alternative "fast tracks" to teaching, perhaps in collaboration with local school districts.

FTF II found that postsecondary education can not only contribute to K-12 educational reform and restructuring, but can benefit by it—and not just by enrolling better-prepared students, but by adopting some of the much-discussed K-12 reforms.

For example, Vermont is making an initial effort to assess students' academic performance through the use of portfolios which contain actual student work in a variety of subject areas. Should the VSC ask Vermont applicants to submit a portfolio of their work with the application for admission? Should the VSC reinforce this use of portfolios by requesting students to submit a portfolio when applying to major in an academic department? Should candidates for VSC faculty positions submit portfolios that contain not just a resume and recent publications, but course syllabi/descriptions, students' tests, student papers and examples of other student projects? There is an opportunity here for the public state college system to reinforce, and benefit by, K-12 educational improvement initiatives.

FTF II also discovered that linkages with K-12 education have often been based upon direct faculty involvement with local or regional schools. This should be supported, but there are other human resources—VSC students, most of whom are Vermonters. There should be fuller discussion and experimentation of ways to improve the learning of VSC students while they provide service to K-12 schools, and simultaneously increase the aspirations of younger Vermonters to pursue a college education.

Finally, FTF II found that evolving collegial relationships between colleges and K-12 schools seem more productive and professional than the traditional college/school relationship based upon an educational hierarchy. Several VSC faculty and administrators, for instance, have been instrumental in the "academic alliance" of history teachers in southern Vermont. Rural teachers, at a school or a college, can benefit by professional association, and by participating in the design of programs to meet their needs for professional development. In addition, more and more school districts are developing staff development plans which aim not only to meet the continuing education goals of individual teachers, but which seek to improve instruction schoolwide. These two important trends of professional association and school district in-service planning provide new opportunities for higher education participation and collaboration.

## VSC FINANCIAL CHALLENGES FOR THE 1990's

### The VSC Financial Model

Since the last Futures Task Force Report, the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) students in the VSC has increased over 34%. When adjusted for inflation, tuition revenue per FTE increased 23%, and state appropriations per Vermont FTE declined by 19%. This combination results in an overall VSC expenditure per FTE which has actually declined by 5% (illustrated in Appendix F). This period since 1985, therefore, is characterized by a large increase in students served, a resultant increase in tuition revenue, a major decrease in appropriation support, and a decline in overall expenditures per student. Each of these factors is an element of what might be called the "VSC financial model" (Halstead, 1991).

- **Low state appropriations:** this has been documented often in both state and national reports. The VSC has a lower percentage of its revenue derived from appropriations than any other state college system in the country. In the 1970's the state appropriation represented just over 33% of all VSC revenue. In the 1980's, the appropriation fluctuated between 25-30% of all VSC revenue. In FY92 the appropriation accounts for 21%, an all-time low. The national average is over 50%.

- **High tuition and fees:** also well-documented are the highest charges in the country for in-state tuition and fees to attend a public state college system. The VSC is more reliant upon tuition dollars than any other public college system. These high tuitions make higher education unaffordable for some Vermonters and impose a heavy burden on others. Thus, Vermonters' access to the VSC is influenced not only by internal factors such as VSC tuition levels and capacity, but also by external factors such as state and federal student aid policies and the annual state appropriation for the VSC.

- **Reliance upon out-of-state students' tuitions:** low state appropriations result in tuition-dependence which in turn causes a fiscal reliance upon out-of-state student enrollment and dollars. Out-of-state students represent just under 20% of all VSC students, but their tuitions alone contribute over 30% of all VSC general operating revenue. The Vermont Higher Education Study Commission (1989) warned that "the affordability of higher education for Vermonters is heavily dependent on the out-of-state student—and this is a cause for considerable concern."

- **Lower income students at the VSC:** Using VSAC grant recipients as the population for analysis, full-time and part-time students attending the VSC have lower family incomes and lower parental contributions than their peers attending Vermont private colleges, UVM, or out-of-state colleges. Every VSC tuition and fee increase makes college less accessible for more Vermonters.

- **Limited revenues per student:** Declining state appropriations combined with constraints on annual tuition increases result in comparatively low VSC operating budgets. Pride in efficiency is tempered by the recognition that limited resources—to achieve a substantial public mission—restrict salaries, staffing levels, library resources, academic equipment and facilities.

The Vermont Higher Education Study Commission, which completed the first review of higher education policies and finances in Vermont in over ten years, noted that

> *although public institutions are not now spending at deficit levels, the Vermont State Colleges and the University of Vermont do not have reserve resources to sustain operations through a downturn in revenues, or an unavoidable upturn in spending. The financial underpinnings of UVM and VSC may not be adequate. VSC is the only public higher education system in the country eligible for Title III aid to disadvantaged institutions.*

There are, however, positive characteristics of the VSC financial model which warrant notice:

- the VSC has operated with balanced budgets since the fiscal crisis of the late 1970's;
- through the leadership of the VSC Board and its administrators, there has been management and planning stability;
- there is consensus about the VSC's service to Vermonters and its access mission;
- the VSC has developed and demonstrated its role as a partner with the State and business and industry in extending education and training programs to Vermonters in underserved areas of Vermont.

**Financial Challenges**

As the VSC moves into the 1990's, three factors challenge this financial model:

- the increasing demand for postsecondary education;
- VSC capacity constraints; and
- limited prospects for necessary revenue.

The increasing demand is coming from Vermont high school graduates (and their numbers will begin to increase again by the mid-90's), adults who continue to seek out postsecondary education opportunities (Community College of Vermont, for example, is the fastest growing college in Vermont), and employers who increasingly need flexible training programs to maintain a productive workforce.

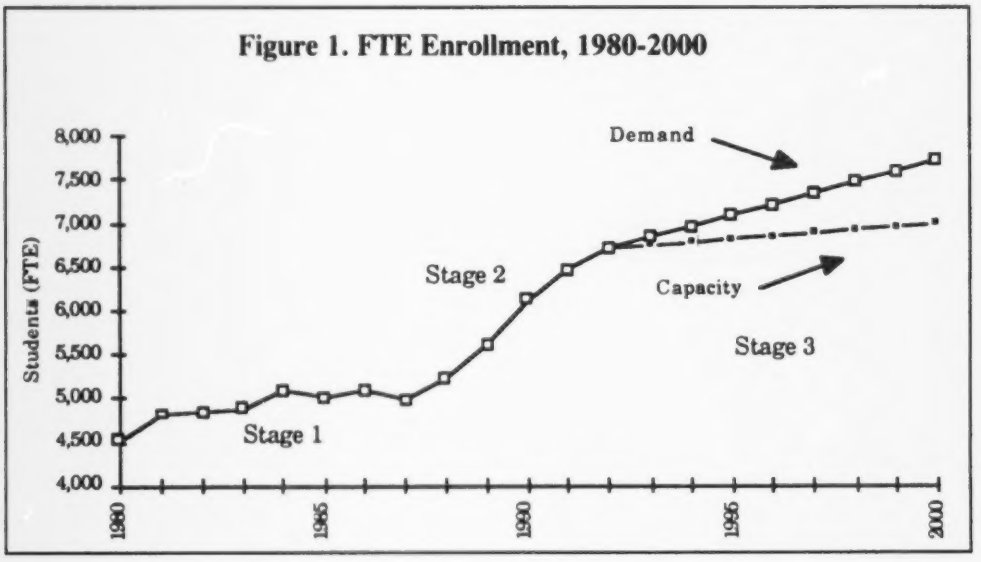
Capacity constraints undercut the VSC's reliance on tuition revenue because limited enrollment growth restricts revenue. With limited gains in appropriation and/or tuition revenue, the VSC must develop successful strategies to generate even greater efficiencies with current revenues—and develop other sources of significant revenue—to meet additional demands for expanded or new programs. Failing at these options, the VSC will need to limit the number of students served to match the expected level of resources. The dilemma is clear: just when more Vermonters recognize the need for postsecondary education, the VSC could be unable to accommodate them.

This particular combination of trends (high demand, capacity constraints and limited revenue) is a new operating environment for the VSC and the State. To realize how new, consider three stages of VSC development since the late 1970's:

| Stage | Years | Trend |
|---|---|---|
| Stage One: | 1980-1986 | Early development |
| Stage Two: | 1986-1993 | Growth |
| Stage Three: | 1993-2000 | Limits to growth |

The first factor illustrating these stages is VSC enrollment from 1980 to 2000, assuming the maintenance of current programs and facilities. Figure 1 shows the three stages of VSC development reflected in enrollment trends and projections.

**Figure 1. FTE Enrollment, 1980-2000**

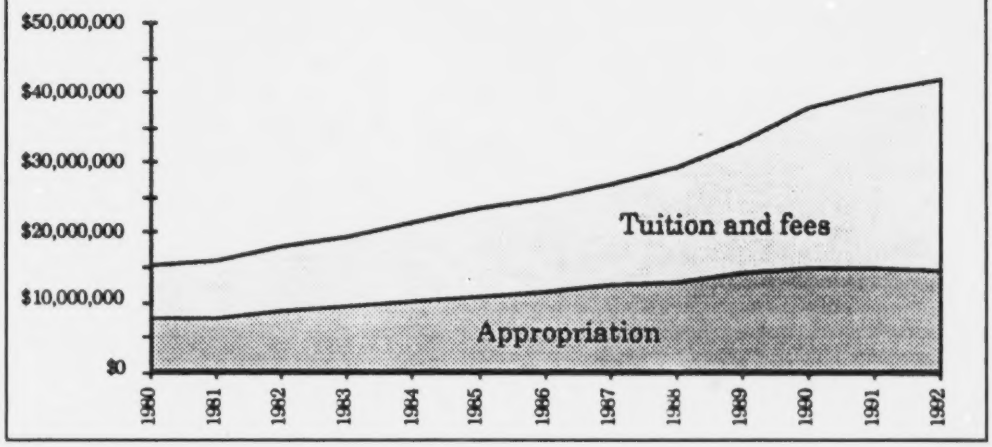



In stage one (1980-1986), VSC enrollment was relatively flat with a total FTE enrollment between 4,500 and 5,000. In stage two (1986-1993), FTE enrollment steadily increased from 5,000 to almost 7,000 students. In stage three (1993-2000), there are limits to growth (even as demand increases) because of VSC capacity constraints.

From a financial perspective, equal amounts of revenue were generated by appropriation and tuition in stage one. However, in stage two, the amount of revenue generated by tuition increased at a much more rapid rate than did appropriation support (see Figure 2).

This shift in the proportions of revenue had two major causes: first, enrollment growth generated tuition and fee revenue beyond the annual tuition increases for continuing students, and, second, modest or declining state appropriation support did not keep pace with the combination of inflation and enrollment increases.

**Figure 2. VSC Major Revenue Sources: 1980-1992**



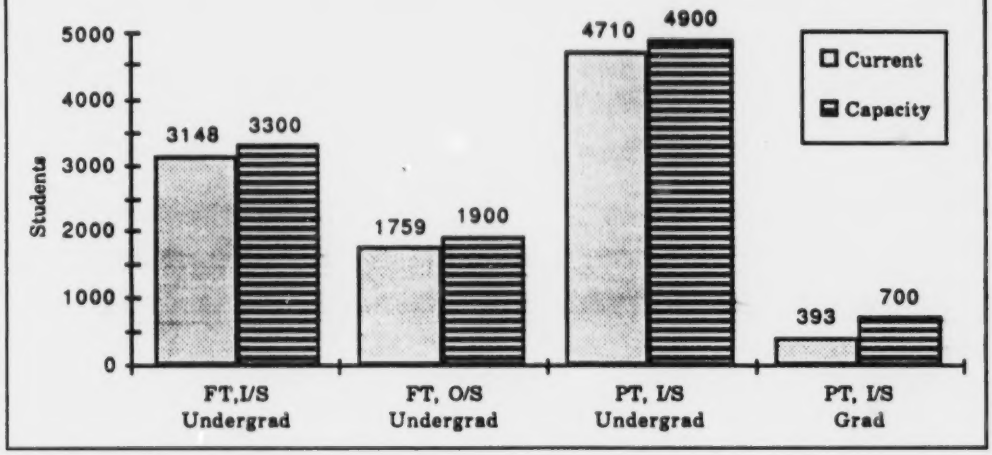

In essence, the VSC developed a "third source" of revenue between 1986 and the early 90's, and that was the tuition and fee revenue produced by enrollment growth. However, given current VSC capacity limits, that revenue source will not be available for the remainder of this decade—even though enrollment projections indicate that additional students may be seeking access to VSC programs.

Enrollment in the late 1980's and early 1990's has either significantly increased or been sustained at capacity levels at four of the five VSC colleges (the exception being VTC which has significantly increased student enrollment through its off-campus programs). Four major student groups account for 98% of all VSC enrollment:

- full-time, undergraduate, in-state students;
- full-time, undergraduate, out-of-state students;
- part-time, undergraduate, in-state students; and
- part-time graduate, in-state students.

Figure 3 shows the FY91 enrollment for each of these four student groups and the accompanying capacity estimates for each group—again, given current programs, services and levels of core resources.

**Figure 3. VSC Enrollment: Current and Capacity**




These findings of revenue and capacity constraints present the greatest challenge to the public mission of the VSC. The VSC cannot turn to student tuitions to fund an increasing portion of its operations and purport to be an accessible system of public colleges responsive to public needs. Similarly, the VSC cannot declare its capacity at 11,000 students and deny admission to Vermonters without compromising its public purpose.

The comparative national data which illustrate Vermont's low appropriations and high public tuition levels are, in themselves, meaningless. It is the effects of these extremes on Vermonters' access to postsecondary education, however, which are meaningful. The challenge is for the State and the VSC to maintain the VSC public mission, and to serve increasing numbers of Vermonters—despite the indicators of declining state support, high tuition levels, and capacity constraints. Should the VSC become selective in its admissions, and deny admission to a greater number of otherwise eligible Vermonters, the consequences will affect the State well beyond the VSC. Underprepared and/or lower-income Vermonters will have a greatly-reduced opportunity to attend postsecondary education. The ideal of an educated Vermont workforce will remain an abstraction described in commission reports, and the gap in Vermont between the have's and the have-not's will continue to broaden.

# FUTURES TASK FORCE II: RECOMMENDATIONS

## TO CONTINUE TO IMPROVE VSC QUALITY

1. The VSC must emphasize and demonstrate the importance of communication, both formal and informal, within the individual colleges and across the VSC system. The VSC should develop strategies to provide more opportunities for conversation and participation in decision-making processes.
2. The college communities must have the willingness and ability to assist those individuals who experience personal problems (such as substance abuse). The colleges cannot function as socially vital communities without this support.
3. Each college should seek to reflect the diversity of the American culture in its programs, curricula, recruitment, and its respect for differences. The colleges should seek to become inclusive, not exclusive, communities.
4. College employees must receive fair wages, otherwise compensation distracts rather than supports employee efforts to serve students.
5. The VSC should evaluate and, when necessary, modify workloads if job descriptions demand too much—or too little. This also means that supervision must be improved. Supervisors must receive the training and support needed to develop professional skills and to exercise their responsibilities in the context of the community's mission.
6. The colleges and employees may benefit by the flexibility to structure workloads, and will benefit by recognition of employees who perform well and accountability and support for those who do not. Additionally, opportunities for professional development should be made available, and encouraged, for all employees.
7. The VSC should build upon the success of the VSC Working Group on Faculty Development and experiment with additional ways to converse about teaching. This conversation should become an integral part of our communities. The VSC Board should consider a policy statement expressing the VSC's emphasis on the centrality of teaching.
8. The VSC should develop, at the college and system levels, a variety of ways to assess the outcomes of student learning in order to assist in the improvement of instructional strategies, program designs, and student life services. The purpose of any assessment should be to increase our understanding about student learning, and to generate additional approaches to enhance that learning.

## TO IMPROVE VERMONTERS' ACCESS

1. The VSC must reaffirm, within the VSC and beyond, its public mission, and especially the commitment to Vermonters' access to postsecondary education.
2. VSC institutions should improve cooperation through shared services and coordinated programs to more efficiently meet the needs of Vermonters.
3. The VSC should improve communication with other organizations, agencies, businesses and industries in Vermont in order to develop effective collaborations which use resources efficiently and meet the needs of Vermonters.

4. VSC admissions and financial aid personnel must work with other organizations such as VSAC to inform parents about financial aid processes and the importance of financial planning strategies, especially when their children are very young.

5. The VSC must continue to commit to those student support services which provide underprepared students the opportunity for academic access and success. The VSC should also seek to expand successful transition programs.

6. The VSC should establish a variety of relationships with K-12 education which improve public school student academic performance and younger students' understanding of the link between their education and future employment opportunities.

7. The VSC has developed innovative delivery systems to bring educational programs to underserved populations of Vermont, through CCV, the Southern Vermont Education Center, Vermont Interactive Television, and numerous programs with business and industry. The VSC must continue to improve Vermonters' access by creating and experimenting with new delivery systems.

8. The VSC must continue to improve services to "off-campus" students, including advising and counseling, computerized access to library resources, and laboratory learning, in order to insure that these students receive comparable educational quality to their on-campus counterparts.

9. With some modest growth of facilities, personnel, and core resources, the VSC must meet the growing demand for postsecondary education in Vermont in efficient and imaginative ways.

## TO ASSURE THAT COLLEGE IS AFFORDABLE

1. There are troubling indicators that Vermonters, especially lower-income Vermonters and adult Vermonters, do not enroll in or continue their postsecondary education because of high tuition charges, concerns about loan debt, or intimidation by the complex financial aid process. The State, Vermont higher education leaders, and the Vermont business community should sponsor primary research in Vermont to assess the financial barriers which prevent Vermonters from pursuing postsecondary education.

2. The impact of student loan debt, both real and anticipated, on access to college in Vermont deserves special scrutiny. Studies indicate that similar loan levels for students of divergent financial backgrounds restrict access for low-income students. Additionally, many Vermonters are averse to incurring substantial debt. The results of such a study would be important for both state public tuition and student aid policies.

3. The VSC's tuition levels are the highest among public colleges in the nation and result from low state appropriation levels. These high public tuitions are a major financial barrier for many low-income Vermonters, particularly those unwilling or unable to incur significant debt. Over the next decade, the VSC needs sufficient and reliable appropriation support from the State of Vermont in order to restrain further tuition increases.

4. To insure access in a high public tuition state, those tuition policies and state financial aid policies must act in concert. The VSC endorses the recommendations of the Vermont Higher Education Study Commission that Vermont's state student aid funds should be targeted to better serve Vermont's most needy students. Without such policy direction, access is jeopardized for many younger and older students unable to afford Vermont's high public tuitions.

## TO DELIVER ESSENTIAL PROGRAMS

1. The VSC has a public responsibility to strengthen postsecondary education and training in Vermont. Therefore, the VSC should play a leadership role in the development of a system of postsecondary vocational education.
2. The VSC should continue to build productive relationships with large and small employers to develop workforce training programs.
3. The VSC should continue to work with state government and Vermont businesses and industries to expand the state's telecommunications capacity in order to extend education and training to underserved regions of Vermont.
4. The VSC should seek federal funds to increase the capacity of current transition programs and continue to incorporate into regular college services those elements of the transition programs which improve student academic achievement and student retention.
5. The VSC should continue to design and support programs and services which enable older students to succeed in college.
6. The VSC should investigate the feasibility of strengthening health-care programs in Vermont at the certificate, two-year, and four-year levels.
7. The VSC should adopt and develop institutional practices, such as the use of student portfolios, which complement school restructuring initiatives in Vermont. The colleges should also continue to develop programs in collaboration with professional associations and school districts.
8. The VSC should actively support those efforts which seek to eliminate illiteracy in Vermont and which emphasize the importance of reading, not just in K-12 and postsecondary education, but in lifelong learning. Economic development is not possible without an educated workforce; an educated workforce is not possible without the ability to read and an enthusiasm for reading.

## TO INCREASE VSC CAPACITY

1. Many of the FTF II findings about VSC capacity are positive. The VSC is serving many more students than it did just five years ago, and there are improved programs and services as a result of this growth. If the VSC is to be productive and efficient with its resources, it should continue to function at or near capacity levels.
2. The VSC should seek greater efficiencies by strengthening the transfer function of VSC institutions, especially between CCV and the three four-year colleges, although the point has more general application as well. This will increase the number of upperclass students at the four-year colleges without adding demands on student housing or dining services.
3. The VSC should play an integral role in the development of postsecondary vocational education which capitalizes on the use of current facilities (not just within the VSC) which may be regionally available and appropriate.

4. The VSC should incrementally increase capacity at the three four-year institutions by adding student housing, possibly in the form of townhouse apartments on the periphery of the campuses. Such housing would not place added demands on dining services, would make fuller use of campus space, and would provide a mature housing environment for the increasing number of upperclass students.

5. The review of capacity limits within the VSC provided a valuable perspective on quality concerns as well. By selectively adding a limited number of new facilities and additions, the VSC has an opportunity to enhance quality and yield greater efficiencies. The list of projects is included in Appendix G. The greatest need is for additional instructional and library space at the campus colleges and CCV.

## TO FINANCE VSC PROGRAMS

1. Even while operating with a very tight core budget, the VSC should continue to seek greater efficiencies which might include: increased use of facilities during the summer, a trimester rather than a semester system, new programs designed for use of facilities during "down times," development of additional instructional spaces which allow for greater diversity in class size, new programs developed in coordination with employers who will benefit by the program graduates, anticipation of budgetary areas with increasing costs and development of plans to control those costs, and continued improvements in the cost/benefit ratio of an individual's (and the state's) investment in postsecondary education (such as clear transfer policies, and improvements in student retention).

2. The VSC should continue to seek, and make the case for, additional revenue, from both traditional sources (such as tuition and fees, and the state appropriation) and non-traditional sources. The VSC should consider the possibilities of tuition differentials for undergraduate and graduate students, and of charging all students for the actual number of enrolled credits. The VSC should continue to work with the State to identify postsecondary education needs in Vermont and to collaborate on appropriate and efficient responses to these needs. All financial operations should be reviewed to maximize revenue, including charging non-educational activities a fair overhead percentage. Efforts at fundraising should be supported at each college, as well as the continued pursuit of federal funds—especially those which underwrite academic support services for the underprepared students.

3. The VSC should have a two-pronged test for new program proposals: first, any proposal must be consistent with mission. Second, the proposal, at minimum, must identify the revenue source for the new program. The VSC should not entertain a program proposal just because it might make money; nor can it entertain strong proposals that are costly and draw away needed resources from other core programs.

4. The VSC must increase its capacity by greater use of facilities during down-time, by some modest facilities expansion, by developing new programs for non-traditional students using non-traditional hours of the day and times of the year, by appropriate use of telecommunications, and by investigating the development of a system of post-secondary vocational education using available regional resources in response to regional needs.

## CONCLUSION:
## THE STATE OF VERMONT AND THE VERMONT STATE COLLEGES, 1992-2000

As we move through the final decade of the 20th Century, the public mission of the Vermont State Colleges becomes ever more relevant for individual Vermonters and for the State of Vermont. An accessible system of public higher education is required to achieve the social and economic goals which were well described in *Pathways to Prosperity* (1989), the report of the Governor's Commission on the Economic Future of Vermont:

> *Three fundamental economic changes are necessary to achieve this plan's vision of a Vermont in which all citizens have equal opportunity to prosper. First, the aggregate wealth must be increased to a level that offers each Vermonter the financial security necessary to be in control of his or her own life. . . Secondly, the wealth of the state must be spread into more rural, remote corners where incomes are now well below the level required for financial emancipation. Thirdly, we must eliminate barriers that create, within all geographical divisions, enclaves of the rich and poor.*

Unless the citizens of Vermont have financial and geographical access to a system of public postsecondary education, these goals are not just impossible, but deceiving. Census data on education and income, personal experience, and the increasing numbers of adults enrolled in college all indicate the same point: postsecondary education is becoming the norm for those who seek some degree of financial security. Sustained, statewide economic development is not possible in a state where a large portion of its citizens cannot afford, or cannot get to, postsecondary education. Vermont will be unable to compete with other states for the types of businesses and industries that provide well-paying jobs without this educated workforce.

The Futures Task Force II recommends no additional campus for the VSC, but it does recommend that the VSC strengthen programs and services at the four campuses and through the twelve CCV sites, especially as described in the quality and finance sections of this report. These improvements, in concert with a number of specific, modest capital projects over the next five years will slightly increase VSC capacity. But the Futures Task Force II is convinced that the VSC can continue its mission of service to more Vermonters by ways other than facilities' expansion. We have learned over the past three to five years about the opportunities of enterprises such as the Southern Vermont Education Center in Springfield and Vermont Interactive Television with its five, and soon-to-be eight, sites. We have learned to work more closely with business and industry to develop on-site education and training programs. And we are just beginning to realize potential programmatic benefits resulting from collaborations with the Agency of Human Services, the Agency of Development and Community Affairs, the Department of Employment and Training, and the Department of Education.

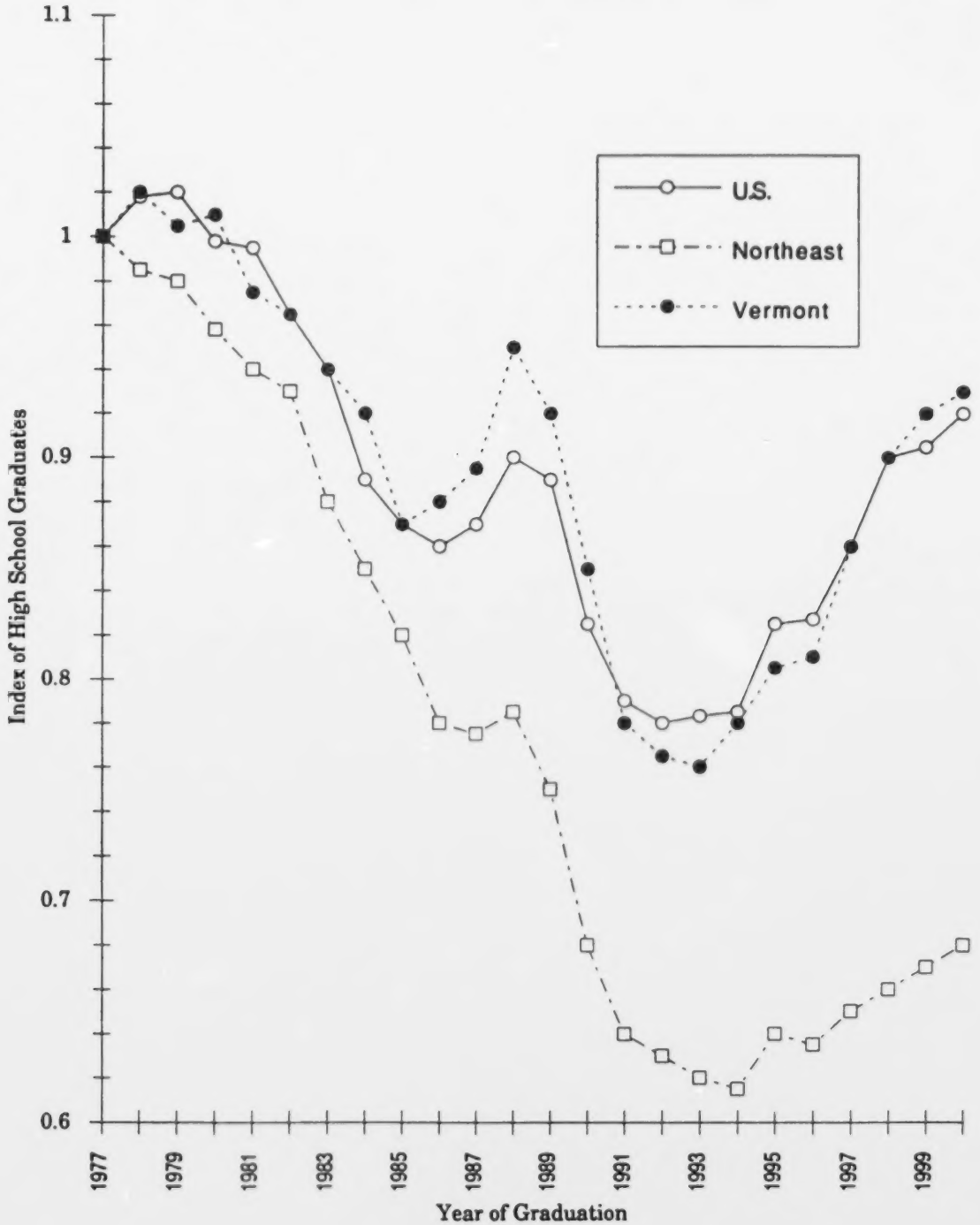
The public good can only be realized if both the State and the VSC fulfill their roles. The Vermont Higher Education Study Commission suggested such a model by describing a "compact" between the State and public higher education:

> *The state and the public institutions should develop "compact" agreements to describe their respective roles and responsibilities for achieving high-priority public purposes. Those purposes should include assuring access for non-traditional students, responding to a changing mix of in-state and out-of-state students, and delivering programs to regions not served by public campuses. The compacts should be used to specify why funds, particularly funds in excess of inflation, have been provided and the associated conditions for their use. The compacts should provide guidance and spell out mutual expectations within bounded areas of policy, but should not otherwise intrude on the usual autonomy of the relationship between the institutions and the state.*

The Vermont State Colleges and the State of Vermont must work as partners throughout the remainder of this decade not just because each is reliant upon the other to realize its goals, but because their goals are, in fact, inseparable. Both partners need to realize that the environment has dramatically changed: a college education in the 1990's is the equivalent of what a high school education was in the 1950's and 1960's—a prerequisite for economic self-sufficiency. The access barriers to postsecondary education are real and growing, and the public policy consequences are more dramatic than thirty, twenty, or even ten years ago. Only by working in concert, can the State and the VSC reduce these barriers, and extend postsecondary education opportunities to Vermonters in all regions of the state.

# APPENDIX A

Trends in High School Graduates, 1977-2000



# APPENDIX B

Educational Attainment and Personal Income

". . . poverty rates decrease dramatically as years of school completed by the householder increases: the poverty rate was 21.8 percent for householders who had not completed high school, 9.3 percent for those who had graduated from high school but not attended college, and 3.8 percent for householders who had completed one or more years of college. This general relationship exists regardless of race or Hispanic origin although large differences exist among these groups within the educational category."

(Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-60, No. 175, *Poverty in the United States: 1990*, U.S. Gov. Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 1991.)

"While the average monthly earnings for persons holding master's, bachelor's or associate degrees significantly increased from 1984 to 1987 (after adjusting for inflation), persons with no postsecondary degree, along with vocational degree holders, experienced no real increase in monthly earning."

| **Educational Attainment** | **1987 monthly earnings** |
|---|---|
| Doctorate | $3,637 |
| Professional | $4,003 |
| Master's | $2,378 |
| Bachelor's | $1,829 |
| Associate | $1,458 |
| Vocational | $1,088 |
| Some college | $1,088 |
| High school graduate | $921 |
| Not high school graduate | $452 |

(Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-70, No. 21, *What's it Worth? Educational Background and Economic Status, Spring 1987.* U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 1990.)

Households, Total Money Income in 1990

| **Years of School Completed** | **Median Income** |
|---|---|
| 8 years or less | $13,523 |
| High school: 1-3 years | $18,191 |
| High School: 4 years | $28,744 |
| College: 1-3 years | $35,724 |
| College: 4 years | $47,083 |
| College: 5 years or more | $54,636 |

(Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-60, No. 174, Money Income of Households, Families, and Persons in the United States: 1990, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 1991.)

# APPENDIX C

Futures Task Force II: The Process

**Fall 1990**

The steering committee for Futures Task Force II included nineteen individuals representing the VSC institutions, as well as regional communities, the business sector, and state government. To respond to the questions from the Board of Trustees, FTF II expanded to four focus groups, each with a membership of between fifteen and twenty individuals. Each group focused on one key topic: quality, access, programs, and finance. Each member of the steering committee served on one of the focus groups. Additionally, each college was represented on each focus group and the majority of trustees volunteered to serve on focus groups as well.

A brief paper outlining key questions for each of the four groups was circulated to all FTF II members and throughout the VSC community. These key questions were:

| | |
|---|---|
| Quality: | What is the caliber of programs and services? How can these programs and services be improved? |
| Access: | Can Vermonters afford college, enter the programs they desire, and are they prepared to succeed in college? |
| Programs: | For those who gain access—access to what? As we enter the 1990's, what are the programs demanded or needed in Vermont? |
| Finance: | How does Vermont, and how should Vermont, distribute the costs of public higher education? |

Prior to the start of focus group meetings, Chancellor Bunting participated in community meetings at each of the VSC institutions to discuss with faculty, staff, and students the purposes of FTF II, the issues, and the process. At each meeting, participants were also asked if the planning paper contained the "right" questions.

**Winter/Spring 1991**

Following the college meetings, the four focus groups began their meetings in December of 1990. Each group met monthly through June of 1991. Some discussions during these six months relied upon significant amounts of data; some benefited by extensive, in-depth conversation; and some were stimulated by the contributions of invited guests who shared their expertise about a specific topic.

During the early months of these discussions, a number of the groups identified two topics as critical to the VSC strategic planning: VSC capacity levels, and Vermonters' financial access to postsecondary education. Therefore, a capacity study group was formed and held meetings at each college to discuss capacity measures, limits, and problems. They also reviewed facilities' data, including measures of student housing, academic space, office space, and parking. The second ad hoc study group focused on financial access by identifying key access questions, reviewing financial data, and responding to a draft report on financial access issues in Vermont.

**Summer 1991**

Thus, by mid-summer of 1991 the four groups had completed their meetings. A draft report was completed for each focus group, as well as draft reports on the two additional issues of VSC capacity and financial access. These six reports were submitted to the Board of Trustees and the steering committee of FTF II for their consideration at the Board's annual summer retreat. These discussions resulted in consensus support for the draft reports. Considerable discussion took place about how to implement the variety of recommendations resulting from the draft reports.

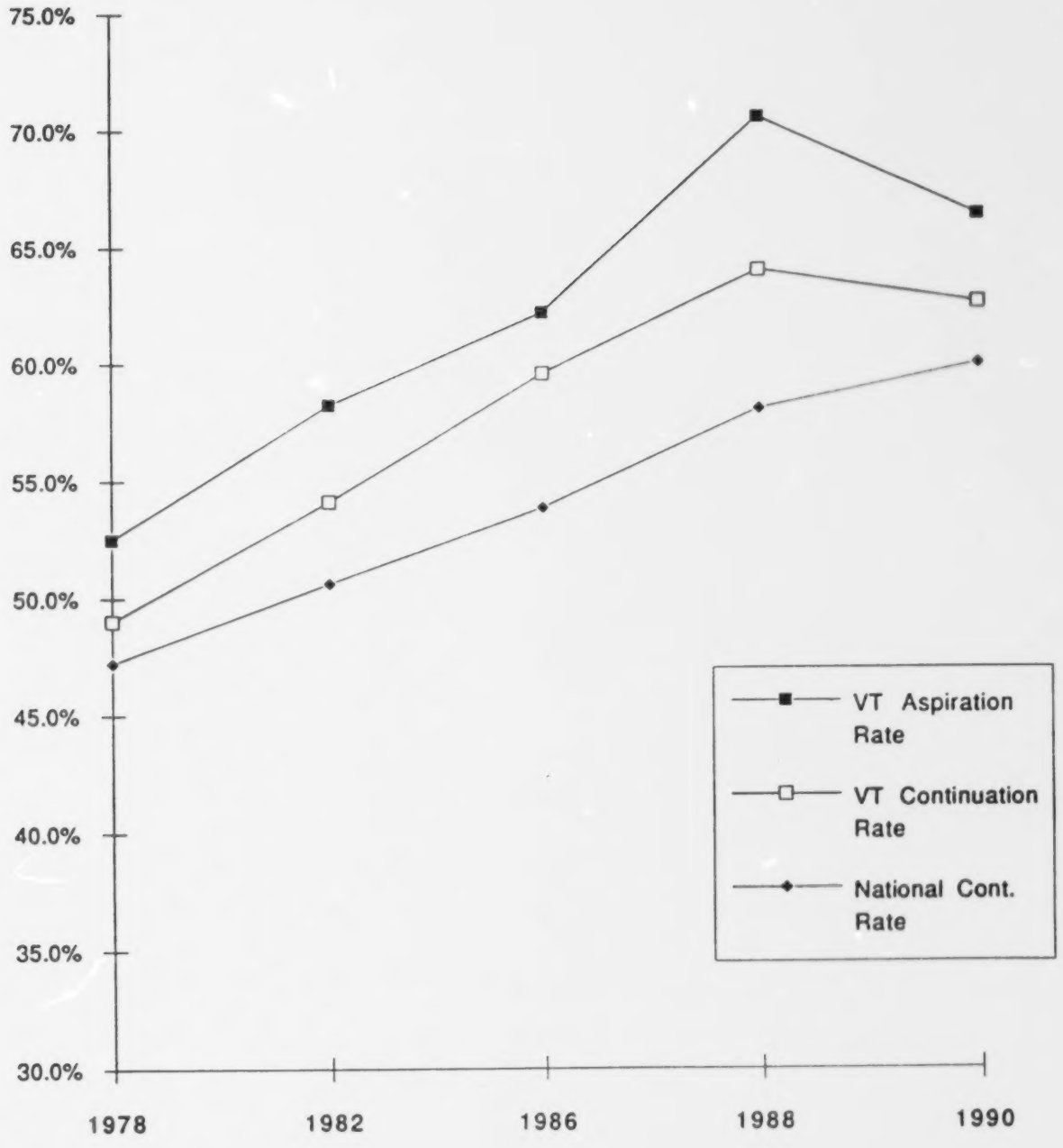
**Fall 1991**

The six draft reports were circulated widely throughout the VSC for further commentary. Two additional strategies were developed at this point. First, the Chancellor participated in a second round of college meetings to discuss the draft reports in order to increase awareness about the FTF II recommendations and to benefit by more commentary that could influence the text of the final planning report. Secondly, the Board and the Chancellor determined that implementation of certain recommendations need not await publication of the public report.

A number of recommendations, especially those internal to the VSC such as improved communication, could begin to be addressed immediately. This approach led to the development of a work plan—or implementation plan—which recognizes that many of the FTF II recommendations require individual implementation strategies and timelines.

# APPENDIX D

Vermont High School Students: Aspiration and Continuation Rates



# APPENDIX E

Student Family Income and Loan Burdens

**Table 1**

**Full-time, Dependent, Undergraduate, VSAC Grant Recipients in FY89 Attending**

| | VSC | UVM | VT Private | Out-of-State |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Average Family Income | $26,501 | $30,638 | $30,735 | $33,666 |
| Average Parents' Contribution | $ 1,745 | $ 2,484 | $ 2,868 | $ 3,338 |

**Table 2**

**Increasing Loan Burdens for Students Attending**

| | VSC | UVM | VT Private | Out-of-State |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total Average Debt in FY82 | $3,725 | $3,483 | $5,396 | $6,202 |
| Total Average Debt in FY89 | $7,246 | $7,909 | $8,790 | $8,518 |
| Percentage Increase (FY82-FY89) | 94.5% | 127.1% | 62.9% | 37.3% |

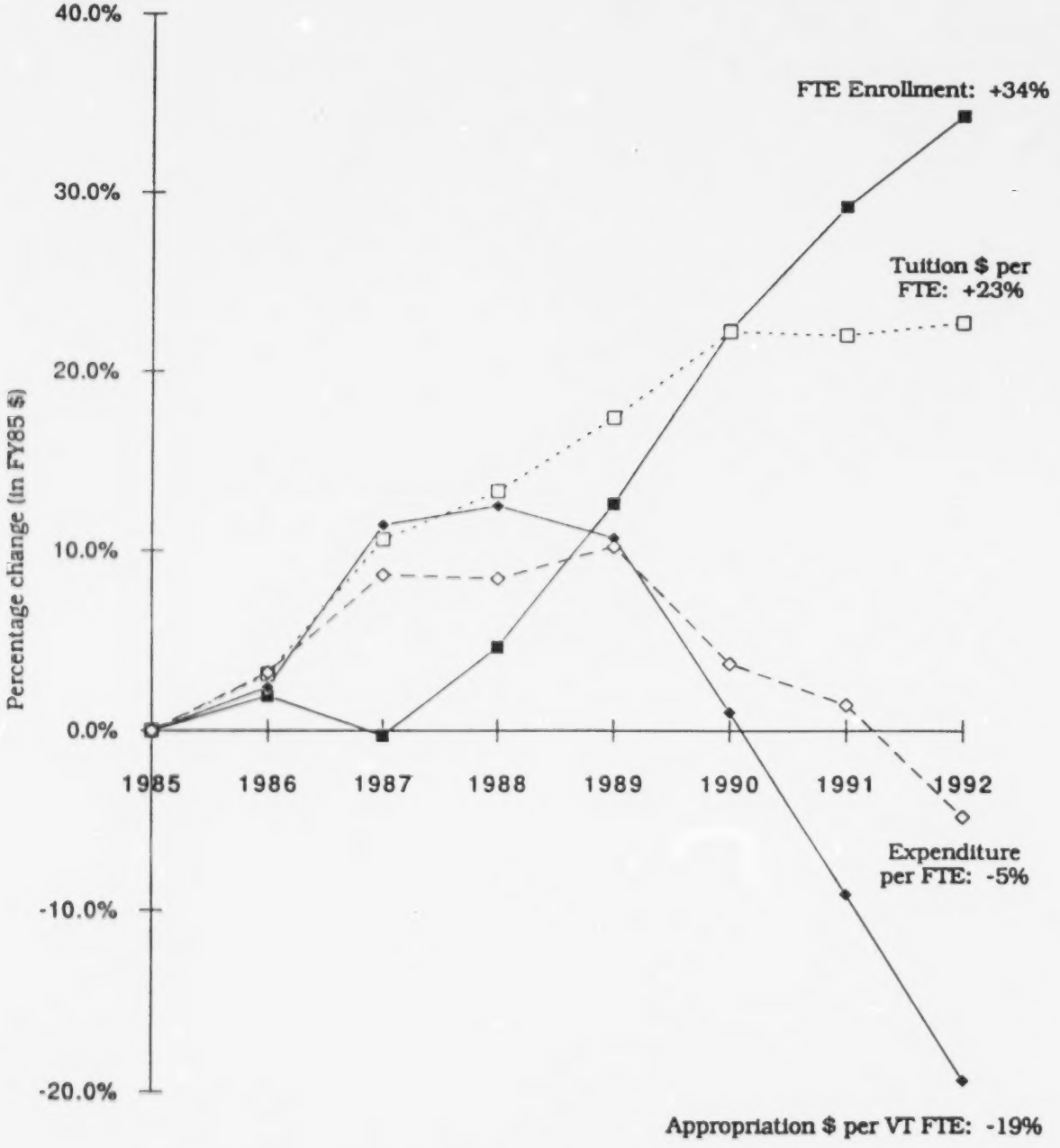
Loan debts are for Vermont students with at least a Stafford loan.
Averages are for graduates of four-year colleges.
Out-of-state loan debt is for graduates of public, out-of-state colleges.
Loan debt for graduates of out-of-state private colleges was $9,127 and the percentage increase was 53.2%.

Sources:
VSAC. Changes in Student Debt Burdens. March 1991.
VSAC. Trends in Postsecondary Education Financing, 1985-1989.

# APPENDIX F

VSC Revenue and Expenditures in FY85 Dollars,

FY85-FY92



# APPENDIX G

VSC Capital Planning

**Track #1 - On-going Projects and Major Maintenance**

Each year develop a detailed list of needs, approximating $3.5 million from State and $1+ million from cumulative VSC sources including dorm/dining funds, development fees, plus some interest income and other.

**Track #2 - New Construction and Additions**

Seek state funding support consistent with the following proposals resulting from VSC's Futures Task Force II planning efforts.

| | **State Appropriation** | **VSC Funds** |
|---|---|---|
| FY'93 | LSC library/academic addition<br>JSC new library/acad bldg plans | LSC student apts planning<br>JSC dorm bricks, phase 1*<br>CSC student apts planning |
| FY'94 | JSC new library/acad bldg<br>CSC academic addition plans | JSC dorm bricks, phase 2*<br>LSC student apts |
| FY'95 | CSC academic addition<br>JSC Dewey admin. renovation<br>VTC auditor./student center plans | JSC Martinetti dorm renov.<br>JSC dorm bricks, phase 3* |
| FY 96 | VTC auditorium/student center | JSC dorm bricks, phase 4*<br>CSC Ellis Hall improvements |
| FY'97 | CCV telecommunications/<br>facilities improvements | |

* These projects also might be phased differently over this five-year period. For example, CCV's project may be better handled in stages throughout this period. The timing for JSC dorm brick replacement could be influenced by favorable bidding climates and interest rate considerations.

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# VERMONT STATE COLLEGES
# FACT SHEET: 1991-1992

**Enrollment in credit courses: Fall 1991**

| | Full-time | Part-time | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Castleton State College | 1,558 | 571 | 2,129 |
| Community College of Vermont | 281 | 4,045 | 4,326 |
| Johnson State College | 1,335 | 395 | 1,730 |
| Lyndon State College | 1,070 | 187 | 1,257 |
| Vermont Technical College | 725 | 147 | 872 |
| VSC Total | 4,969 | 5,345 | 10,314 |
| Number of Vermonters | 3,205 | 5,103 | 8,308 |
| Percent Vermonters | 64% | 95% | 81% |

**Out-of-state student enrollment: Fall 1991**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| New Hampshire | 398 | New Jersey | 138 |
| Massachusetts | 390 | Rhode Island | 59 |
| New York | 375 | Pennsylvania | 32 |
| Connecticut | 314 | Other U.S. | 76 |
| Maine | 183 | Foreign | 41 |

**Non-traditional students (undergrads over 22; graduate students over 26)**

| | Women | Men |
|---|---|---|
| Full-time undergraduate students | 24% | 20% |
| Part-time undergraduate students | 86% | 80% |
| Graduate students | 89% | 90% |

**Charges for full-time undergraduates: 1991-1992**

| | Tuition/fees | Room/board | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| In-state students: | | | |
| Castleton, Johnson, and Lyndon | $3,340 | 4,290 | $7,630 |
| Community College of Vermont | $2,164 | $0 | $2,164 |
| Vermont Technical College | $3,940 | $4,290 | $8,230 |
| Out-of-state students: | | | |
| Castleton, Johnson, and Lyndon | $6,964 | $4,290 | $11,254 |
| Community College of Vermont | $3,864 | $0 | $3,864 |
| Vermont Technical College | $7,324 | $4,290 | $11,614 |

# FUTURES TASK FORCE II: PARTICIPANTS

## STEERING COMMITTEE

Charles Bunting, Chancellor
and Chair of FTF II
Robert Clarke, President
Vermont Technical College
Miriam Conlon, Faculty
Vermont Technical College
Jean DeVoe, Former President
Staff Federation, Castleton State College
Senator John Farmer, VSC Trustee
Bill Gilbert, Downs, Rachlin & Martin
Lyle Gray, President, Castleton State College
Anne Hampton, Faculty, Castleton State College
Churchill Hindes, VSC Trustee
Steve Ingram, Academic Dean
Vermont Technical College
Ken Kalb, Former President
Community College of Vermont
Dick Mallary, President
VT Electric Power Company
Mark Murphy, Former VSC
Student Trustee
John Nicholls, VSC Trustee
Brent Sargent, Director of OEP
Community College of Vermont
Patricia Thomas, Former Commissioner
Dept. of Employment & Training
Peggy Williams, President
Lyndon State College
R. Marshall Witten, VSC Trustee
Rod Zwick, Faculty
Lyndon State College

## ADDITIONAL PARTICIPANTS

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Michael Audet, VSC Trustee
Martha Austin, CSC
Cynthia Baldwin, LSC
Joseph Bellevance, LSC
Robert Bertram, CSC
Linda Bishop, LSC
Richard Brandfass, VSC
David Buchdahl, CCV
Stanley Carpenter, VSC
Nancy Chard, SVEC
Ron Chesbrough, JSC
Barbara Church, MCHV
David Cobb, Lyndon Institute
David Conant, LSC
Jeanie Crosby, VSC
William Crangle, LSC
Rose Distel, VTC
Timothy Donovan, CCV
James Doyle, LSC
George Dunsmore, Former VSC Trustee
Terri Feeley, VSC Trustee
Kathleen Finck, Barre Area Voc. Ctr.
Maureen Gardner, VSC
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Community College of Vermont
Robert Nicol, VSC
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Bruce Richardson, Deputy Comm. of
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# VERMONT STATE COLLEGES